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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

**Consideration of an additional regional implementation annex to the Convention**

Note by the secretariat

1. During the first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 1) at its 13th plenary meeting on 10 October 1997, the President of the Conference made the following statement: "I noted statements made by some countries of Central and Eastern Europe concerning their wish to establish an additional regional instrument to the present Convention that would cover the specific concerns of these countries as well as the special commitments they are prepared to undertake within the framework of the Convention. I understand those statements as an indication of the firm resolve of those countries to become soon Parties to the Convention by completing the process of the needed accession. In this context consultations should be undertaken at an appropriate time and under the guidance of the Bureau of the COP in order to lauch this process. These consultations will be facilitated by an early completion of the needed process of accession to the Convention." (ICCD/COP(1)/11, para. 53).

2. The United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 52/198 of 18 December 1997, paragraph 6, invited the Conference of the Parties to facilitate the elaboration of an additional regional implementation annex to the Convention for the countries of the Eastern and Central European region to be launched at the second session of the Conference of the Parties in 1998, in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Convention and with a view to finalizing it as soon as possible.

3. On 31 March 1998, the UNCCD secretariat organized in Geneva a briefing for the representatives from the Permanent Missions of Central and Eastern European countries. Participants at the meeting discussed the issue of facilitating the necessary accessions to the Convention of the regional countries and the

preparation of an additional regional implementation annex. On 19 November 1998, at the request of the secretariat, Ambassador Bo Kjellen of Sweden, former Chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, organized informal consultations in Geneva for representatives from countries of Central and Eastern Europe. During the consultations, participants from a number of countries exchanged views on the first preliminary outline of a regional implementation annex for Central and Eastern Europe, prepared by Ambassador Bo Kjellen, as well as on the issue of the accession to the Convention of the relevant countries.

4. The Conference of the Parties, by its decision 11/COP.2, urged observer countries from Eastern and Central Europe to take appropriate actions to become parties to the Convention, thereby facilitating adoption of an additional regional implementation annex to the Convention by the Conference of the Parties at its fourth session. The Conference invited countries of the region to pursue consultations with a view to elaborating a draft additional regional implementation annex to the Convention and to submit such a draft for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its third session (COP 3).

5. Further to this decision, consultations for countries of Central and Eastern Europe were organized by Ambassador Bo Kjellen in New York on 19 April 1999. Participants at the consultations were provided with the second preliminary outline of a regional implementation annex for Central and Eastern Europe, as prepared by Ambassador Bo Kjellen. A broad agreement was reached on this outline. Participants also reviewed the situation with regard to the accession of the countries of the region to the Convention. There was general agreement that a revised text taking into account proposed amendments should be submitted to COP 3. It was also understood that this text at the present stage is not binding for any country, but represents a general consensus on the contents and structure of an annex, aimed at facilitating the further process. On the basis of this understanding, the representative of Armenia indicated that his country, as a Party to the Convention, might be willing to submit this text to the UNCCD secretariat for circulation as a document for COP 3.

6. The Bureau of the Conference has provided guidance to all the above-mentioned consultations since COP 1. At its meeting held in Bonn on 18 June 1999, the Bureau took note of the ongoing process of accession to the Convention of Central and Eastern European countries and welcomed the intention of Armenia to transmit the text to the UNCCD secretariat for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its third session.

7. On 23 June 1999, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations, transmitted to the UNCCD secretariat a draft additional regional implementation annex for Central and Eastern Europe for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its third session. The draft is reproduced as an annex to this note.

**Annex**

DRAFT ADDITIONAL REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION ANNEX FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Article 1
PURPOSE

The purpose of this Annex is to provide guidelines and arrangements for the effective implementation of the Convention in affected country Parties of the Central and Eastern European region, in the light of its particular conditions.

Article 2
PARTICULAR CONDITIONS OF THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN REGION

The particular conditions of the Central and Eastern European region referred to in article 1, which apply in varying degrees to the affected country Parties of the region include:

(a) specific problems and challenges related to the current process of economic transition, including macroeconomic and financial problems and the need for strengthening the social and political framework for economic and market reforms;

(b) the variety of forms of land degradation in the different ecosystems of the region, including the effects of drought and the risks of desertification in regions prone to soil erosion caused by water and wind;

(c) crisis conditions in agriculture due i.e. to depletion of arable land, problems related to inappropriate irrigation systems and gradual deterioration of soil and water conservation structures;

(d) unsustainable exploitation of water resources leading to serious environmental damage, including chemical pollution, salinisation and exhaustion of aquifers;

(e) forest coverage losses due to climatic factors, consequences of air pollution and frequent wildfires;

(f) the use of unsustainable development practices in affected areas as a result of complex interactions among physical, biological, political, social and economic factors;

(g) the risks of growing economic hardships and deteriorating social conditions in areas affected by land degradation, desertification and drought;

(h) the need to review research objectives and the policy and legislative framework for the sustainable management of natural resources;

(i) the opening up of the region towards wider international cooperation and the pursuit of broad objectives of sustainable development.

Article 3
ACTION PROGRAMMES

1. National action programmes shall be an integral part of the policy framework for sustainable development and address in an appropriate manner the various forms of land degradation, desertification and drought affecting the Parties of the region.

2. A consultative and participatory process, involving appropriate levels of Government, local communities and non-governmental organizations shall be undertaken to provide guidance on a strategy with flexible planning to allow maximum local participation, pursuant to article 10, paragraph 2(f) of the Convention. As appropriate, bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies may be involved in this process at the request of the affected country concerned.

Article 4
PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAMMES

In preparing and implementing national action programmes pursuant to articles 9 and 10 of the Convention, each affected Party of the region shall, as appropriate:

(a) designate appropriate bodies responsible for the preparation, coordination and implementation of its programme;

(b) involve affected populations, including local communities, in the elaboration, coordination and implementation of the programme through a locally driven consultative process, with the cooperation of local authorities and relevant non-governmental organizations;

(c) survey the state of the environment in affected areas to assess the causes and consequences of desertification and to determine priority areas for action;

(d) evaluate, with the participation of affected populations, past and current programmes in order to design a strategy and elaborate actions in the action programme;

(e) prepare technical and financial programmes based on the information gained through the activities in subparagraphs (a) to (d); and

(f) develop and utilize procedures and benchmarks for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the programme.

## Article 5
## SUBREGIONAL, REGIONAL AND JOINT ACTION PROGRAMMES

1. Affected country Parties of the region, in accordance with articles 11 and 12 of the Convention, may prepare and implement subregional and/or regional action programmes in order to complement and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of national action programmes. Two or more affected country Parties of the region may similarly agree to prepare a joint action programme between or among them.

2. Such programmes may be prepared and implemented in collaboration with other Parties or regions. The objective of such collaboration would be to secure an enabling international environment and to facilitate financial and/or technical support or other forms of assistance to address more effectively desertification and drought issues at different levels.

3. The provisions of articles 3 and 4 shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the preparation and implementation of subregional, regional and joint action programmes. In addition, such programmes may include the conduct of research and development activities concerning selected ecosystems in affected areas.

4. In preparing and implementing subregional, regional or joint action programmes, affected country Parties of the region shall, as appropriate:

(a) identify, in cooperation with national institutions, national objectives relating to desertification which can better be met by such programmes and relevant activities which could be effectively carried out through them;

(b) evaluate the operational capacities and activities of relevant regional, subregional and national institutions;

(c) assess existing programmes relating to desertification among Parties of the region and their relationship with national action programmes; and

(d) consider action for the coordination of subregional, regional and joint action programmes, including, as appropriate, the establishment of coordination committees composed of representatives of each affected country concerned to review progress in combating desertification, harmonize national action programmes, make recommendations at the various stages of preparation and implementation of the subregional, regional or joint action programmes, and act as focal points for the promotion and coordination of technical cooperation pursuant to articles 16 and 19 of the Convention.

Article 6

TECHNICAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION

In conformity with the objective and principles of the Convention, Parties of the region shall, individually or jointly:

(a) promote the strengthening of scientific and technical cooperation networks, of monitoring indicators and of information systems at all levels, as well as their integration, as appropriate, in worldwide systems of information; and

(b) promote the development, adaptation and transfer of relevant existing and new environmentally sound technologies within and outside the region.

Article 7

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISMS

In conformity with the objective and principles of the Convention, affected country Parties of the region shall, individually or jointly:

(a) adopt measures to rationalize and strengthen mechanisms to supply funds through public and private investment with a view to achieving concrete results in action to combat land degradation and desertification and mitigate the effects of drought;

(b) identify international cooperation requirements in support of national efforts, thereby creating, in particular, an enabling environment for investments and encouraging active investment policies and an integrated approach to effectively combating desertification, including early identification of the problems caused by this process;

(c) seek the participation of bilateral and/or multilateral partners and financial cooperation institutions with a view to ensuring implementation of the Convention, including programme activities which take into account the specific needs of affected country Parties of the region; and

(d) assess the possible impact of article 2(a) on the implementation of articles 6, 13 and 20 and other related provisions of the Convention.

Article 8

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

1. In order to give effect to this Annex, Parties of the region shall:

(a) establish and/or strengthen national focal points to coordinate action to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought; and

(b) consider mechanisms to strengthen regional cooperation, as appropriate.

2. The permanent secretariat may, at the request of Parties of the region and pursuant to article 23 of the Convention, facilitate the convocation of coordination meetings in the region by:

(a) providing advice on the organization of effective coordination arrangements, drawing on experience from other such arrangements; and

(b) providing other information that may be relevant in establishing or improving coordination processes.

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